

Governor Engler Details Clean Michigan Plan

\$500 Million to Clean Toxic Sites, Improve Water Quality, Reclaim Waterfronts and Upgrade State Parks

In remarks to the Economic Club of Detroit today, Governor Engler provided details on the Clean Michigan Initiative first announced in his State of the State message last week. The plan invests \$500 million to maintain Michigan's leadership as a careful steward of our precious natural resource heritage.

"This is a win-win plan for Michigan," said Governor Engler. "Everyone in Michigan benefits when water is cleaner, when rivers are more healthy, when parks are improved and when toxic sites are removed and redeveloped."

The Clean Michigan Initiative

Governor Engler explained that his Clean Michigan Initiative is a \$500 million plan with four critical objectives:

- to clean up toxic sites that threaten public health and stifle development,
- to make critically-needed improvements at our state parks,
- to protect and enhance the quality of our drinking water and clean up our lakes, rivers and streams,
- and to revitalize local waterfronts.

\$325 Million to Remove Toxic Sites and Redevelop Brownfields

The first step in Governor Engler's plan is investing \$325 million to clean up toxic sites and to restore contaminated property to productive use.

Governor Engler explained that this initiative follows landmark reforms enacted in 1995 and 1996 to bring common sense to environmental cleanup projects.

Those bipartisan reforms have produced private investment in brownfield reclamation of more than \$310 million and the creation of nearly 3,400 jobs.

"Even more importantly, the reforms have cut the cost of an average cleanup by 75 percent," Engler said. "That means the \$325 million we intend to devote to this project has the same effect more than \$1 billion in spending would have had just a few years ago."

Another benefit of redeveloping brownfields is that it reduces the development pressure on farms and green space.

\$50 Million to Upgrade State Parks

The second step in the Clean Michigan Initiative is \$50 million to spruce up and revitalize Michigan's state parks.

"Michigan is a tourism and recreation leader -- not just for the nation, but increasingly, for the world," said Engler "Our 96 state parks are the jewels in our crown, a tremendous asset."

The new funding will be used to improve infrastructure -- ranging from showers and hookups to bathrooms and buildings -- to meet the needs of park users well into the 21st century.

\$50 Million to Improve Water Quality and \$25 Million to Clean Up Rivers

The third critical component of this plan to improve Michigan's environment is an ambitious strategy to spend \$50 million to improve water quality and \$25 million to remove dangerous sediments from targeted rivers and lakes

Governor Engler noted that as chairman of the National Geographic Society's Forum on Nonpoint Source Pollution, he headed a national effort to study ways to reduce pollution that runs off construction sites, farm fields and parking lots or fertilizer and pesticide runoff from lawns, parks and golf courses.

"Solving this problem is a massive undertaking that goes beyond city, county, regional or even state boundaries," said Engler. "For example, this kind of effort in the Clinton River watershed will have a very positive effect on Lake St. Clair."

Michigan will also spend \$25 million for sediment cleanup in contaminated hotspots in targeted rivers and lakes statewide.

Experts estimate that in these sites there is 3,000,000 cubic yards of sediment contaminated with PCBs, mercury, arsenic and DDT that were discharged long before pollution controls were in place.

\$50 Million to Reclaim and Revitalize Waterfronts

To make Michigan waterfronts accessible and enjoyable for more citizens, the final step in Governor Engler's plan is the creation of a \$50 million Waterfront Reclamation and Revitalization Fund.

"I believe that as Detroit approaches its tricentennial in 2001, we should set forth a goal of restoring and renewing the river and its shoreline -- to make it a showplace for the 21st century where visitors and residents can enjoy the pleasures of a vibrant waterfront,"

Engler said. "With community support, similar projects can revitalize shorelines statewide."

Success Means Passing a Ballot Proposal

Governor Engler explained that the Clean Michigan Initiative will need to be placed on the ballot in November and requires voter approval to take effect.

"To achieve all that I have outlined in my Clean Michigan Initiative, we will have to pass a ballot proposal," Engler said. "I ask all of you to help -- make it law, make our state cleaner and make the quality of our lives better."